

THE LEAF EATERS

In his best suit, holding champagne,
he stands politely in his spotless efficiency
apartment. He's thrown a tarpaulin across
his waterbed to show his good intentions.
But the little leaf-eaters do not appear.

He takes out poems and reads,
his new condo ringing with his tender
passion. He lingers in his hallway,
hung with his prize-winning oils.
Still the soft curves, the swayers
under smooth chemises don't come near.

He executes karate katas on his thick front lawn,
each movement crisp, suffused with power.
At the gym, he goes three hard rounds,
pumps iron another hour then,
sweat-drenched and panting, waits.
Yet the musical high voices, silky
hair and bright mascaraed eyes steer clear.

Guitar crotch-high, a thrusting satyr,
he rocks out into his latest hits.
Strings stretched to breaking,
he screams, crooms, growls, cries,
struts/humps/wiggles/glides through his echoing mansion.
But the clingers to muscled arms and dreams
of house and baby, the perfumed
snugglers in the night don't seem to hear.

He slaves for years to earn four PhDs,
a DDS, JD, and MD with two specialties.
He rises from stockboy to president of six big
companies, dons a different hand-tailored
suit every day, and when too old and sick to drive,
is chauffeured through BelAir in his platinum Rolls.
Still the lovers of new shoes and long-stemmed roses,
gentle wearers of bikinis and frilly lingerie,
the fabled, all-healing leaf-eaters do not appear.

BLESSINGS IN DISGUISE

The day, age 4, I left my turtle in a cake pan in
the sun and his blood boiled;
The night Sue dumped me to go back with her ex;
The morning Karen's car was stolen, and we both
stood there and cried;

The time I dove into my Milk Drop Moe pool, landing
on a plastic ship which took an ice-cream-sized

scoop out of my thigh;
 The first two years after the drunk rear-ended me, and
 every time I bent down, I remembered;
 The little league game where a line drive smashed me in
 the balls and I threw out the runner, then threw up;
 My first talent show, when I dared an Elvis wiggle,
 dropped my guitar on my foot and broke my toe;
 Homeroom, 9th grade, being publically stripped of the
 Class Presidency, after a "friend" told Miss Birchett
 that I called her "Old Bird Turd;"
 The night at Tommy Sloane's when I laughed so hard I peed
 my khaki pants in front of his big sister, who I loved;
 The Saturday my parents squashed my 8th birthday party
 because Terri next door hit me, and I hit back;
 The afternoon my novel came back, shitcanned, crushed by
 the Post Office, soaked by the morning's rain;
 The night Craig and Tim squeezed me out of my own band;
 The night I put away my velvet pants and Fender Strat for
 good;
 The night I learned my mother's lawyer had left for
 Barbados with her insurance money, one more attorney
 proving crime does pay;
 Each day I see my father wandering around the house, half-
 blind, after a mugger bashed him with a rifle at
 age 73 —
 All the things I've whined and cried and raged and
 groaned and blushed and cursed about for 37 years
 file by our tent in the mountains as we make love.
 One by one.
 They pull off black hoods and snarling masks, revealing
 smiles, tears tracking kind faces
 Sad to have hurt me,
 Happy to have led me here.

WITH THE AID OF COMIC BOOK ADS, WEEB
 FINALLY MAKES SOMETHING OF HIMSELF

Weeb, with his Pocket Spy Telescope,
 Two-Headed Nickel,
 Unbeatable Self-Defense Course,
 Flashing Police-Light,
 Stop Watch (98 cents),
 Fake Bullet Holes,
 Silent Dog Whistle,
 Police Handcuffs,